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Deck the halls
Leah Daniels belts out some Christmas tunes as a part of the fifth annual Winter Fair on Nov. 22. Daniels performed with Beverly Mahood at the Music Room in Castle Antiques in Haliburton. /TIM YANO Staff photographer

Canada Post strike continues

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

There's a cold sleet falling from the skies at the end of November, with the countdown to Christmas hovering around the one month mark. What's normally a time where the local post offices are at their jolliest and most festive, this year, there's a different energy to the community hub. As of Friday, Nov. 15, 55,000 Canada Post workers went on strike, including the many that tie our communities together in Haliburton County. "Everybody is really upset about it," said Kelly Lawr, who works with the Haliburton branch, "but we had to do it at a time that there's an impact." At the time of press, the strike is ongoing, as tensions continue to rise.

On top of the gaps that the pause in postal services has presented leading

see WORKERS page 2

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Seniors dental care continues despite provider change

JAMES MATTHEWS
Staff Reporter

The Haliburton County agency that delivers seniors' dental care with the local public health unit will end its service agreement in January.

Dr. Natalie Bocking, the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit's medical officer and CEO, told the health board Nov. 21 that increased clients in a federal dental program for seniors has caused a drop in clients to the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP).

"The clients they are seeing are now accessing that service through other dental care providers through the federal program," Bocking said. "So it does not result in any recipients or clients losing service."

The province established its seniors' dental care program in 2019 and charged public health units with its delivery in collaboration with community health centres (CHC) and Aboriginal Health Access Centres.

If health units were to partner with external agencies, there was a need to draft service level agreements (SLAs) to ensure clear and consistent communication for the delivery of the program, funding, and reporting requirements.

Since the HKPR unit didn't have a CHC in the north, Bocking said a unique partnership with Volunteer Dental Outreach of Haliburton (VDO) was explored.

"This program has been successfully implemented across the three sites since 2019 and recently the sites have seen changes related to the new federally funded Canadian Dental Care Program (CDPC)," according to a briefing note distributed to the unit's board.

"The changes are positive in that more clients are enrolling in the CDPC program and sites offering OSDCP are seeing decreased enrollment in the program."

And that's why VDO intends to end delivery of the seniors' program in January.

Seniors can be seen by participating dental providers for treatment through the federal program and, as such, the VDO wants to avoid taking away patients from those practices.

There are two dental practices in Haliburton Village, less than a five-minute drive from the VDO clinic, who are listed on the CDCP dental provider search tool, as accepting clients on this program.

Bocking said the VDO stated that they are helping clients sign up for CDCP and has confirmed that legally all clients rostered with them will continue to receive services by VDO and will not be turned away.

"I anticipate that the provincial program will continue to review their numbers given across the province people are accessing the federal program first and then the provincial one," Bocking said.

Workers seeking a fair deal from Crown corporation

from page 1

up to the holidays, others picketing out the front of the office in Haliburton noted that their contract ended at the end of November, leaving them without pay or benefits while they are striking.

The crux of the strike, according to the workers in Haliburton, lies on living wage pay and access to benefits. The union is seeking a 24 per cent wage increase, to keep up with cost of living, as well as the multiple minimum wage increases that have taken place over the years that the Crown corporation has not honoured. Canada Post has counter-offered an 11.5 per cent increase, which is far from the request; resulting in the strike continuing with no end in sight.

"Our demands are reasonable: fair wages, safe working conditions, the right to retire with dignity and the expansion of services at the public post office," reads the official statement from the union of postal workers.

The Haliburton workers were quick to add that the corporation is trying to implement unfair starting pay and expectations for new workers with the postal service, and the current employees won't stand for it. "We're trying to fight for the new people," said Lawr. "Otherwise, it creates such a divide between workers."

Jackie Saik, the owner of the online store Made For The Lake apparel and goods, took to Instagram last Tuesday, when it became clear that the strike was far from over. "Small businesses are still shipping," she pleaded in the post. "Please don't give up on them!"

Saik largely relies on Canada Post to ship her products

Canada Post workers from Haliburton, Minden, Kinmount, Bracebride, and Sunderland gathered together to picket on Friday, Nov. 22 in Haliburton. The workers alternate between locations to represent a large group of employees currently on strike until the Canada Post Crown corporation provides fair wages and benefits to the staff. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

across the country, and with the ongoing strike and the holidays on the horizon, Saik is concerned about what this could mean for her livelihood. "I made the post out of desperation," she told the *Echo*, "sales were nowhere close to where they need to be for this time of year."

The business owner went on to clarify that her frustrations do not lie with those currently striking, rather, she is airing her grievances towards Canada Post as a corporation. "I have nothing against the workers or their right to strike," she noted. "But I cannot pause my entire business to show support. It is not an option for me. I am doing what is best for my business to hopefully continue on."

After years of uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Saik said that herself and many other online businesses were depending on this time of year to carry them through the quieter months ahead. "I was personally counting on this month to be something that would really help me," she said. "The business from the holidays is what gets us through January and February."

Saik noted that while it's slightly more complicated, she has figured out a way to sell items from her online shop via UPS, but she is unable to send to letter boxes or card mail until the strike is resolved.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), Canada's largest association of small business owners across the country, released a formal statement in light of the strike. They have made a public plea to the federal government to step into the dispute, and put an end to the strike before more small businesses are impacted. "We hope the parties quickly reach a deal through collective bargaining, but reports say they're still 'far apart.' Our economy and small businesses cannot afford another week of postal disruption," said Corinne Pohlmann, Executive Vice-President of Advocacy at CFIB. "Small businesses, especially those in rural areas, are already losing on sales and missing payments, and they have to rethink delivery strategies on the eve of the busy holiday season."

According to CFIB, over three quarters of small businesses in rural communities rely on Canada Post, and will be directly impacted by the work stoppage at this time.

"We feel bad for our customers," said Lawr, noting that she and her colleagues miss their regular routes, and the familiar faces they have become accustomed to over the years, but they won't budge until a fair offer is presented by the Crown corporation. "They're trying to implement a 'one size fits all' approach across the board," she said. "But it's not a 'one size fits all' solution."

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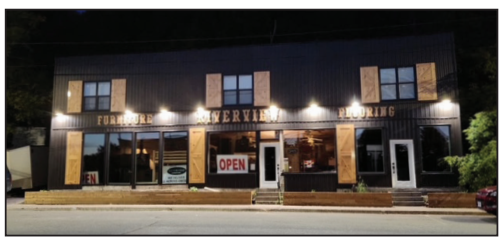

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Public health unit dips into cash reserves for next budget

JAMES MATTHEWS
Staff Reporter

The public health unit that serves Haliburton County anticipates an increase of less than one per cent in next year's budget.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit has inked next year's spending plan in the context of if its merger with Peterborough Public Health falls through.

Those public health agencies announced in February that their respective boards approved their voluntary merger.

The Ministry of Health announced in August 2023 plans to strengthen the public health sector by offering one-time funding, resources, and supports to public health agencies that decide to voluntarily merge by Jan. 1, 2025.

Given there are weeks until the deadline, the HKPR set its draft budget for next year as if the merger doesn't happen.

"That is the context for this budget," said Dr. Natalie Bocking, the health unit's medical officer and CEO. "This is a solo, non-merger budget for HKPR."

Bocking said there are three core "buckets" of funding the unit gets from the provincial Ministry of Health.

The first is its base funding that's cost-shared with Haliburton County, Northumberland County, and City of Kawartha Lakes.

"That base funding funds all of the requirements as a global amount in the Ontario Public Health Standards," she said. "That amount, because it's cost-shared, is the amount that municipalities also contribute into."

The second bucket of money goes to the programs that are 100 per cent funded by the province.

And the third bucket is one-time funding, she said. The local health unit has traditionally used that money for things like the needle exchange program and infrequent investments such as new vaccine refrigerators and security cameras.

HKPR does get some money from the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program.

"That funding has to be used for that program," she said. "The global amount for our base budget is the amount we have flexibility for to allocate across all of our different programs and services."

The province has maintained its contribution of a one per cent increase applied to the total base funding next year. But there will be limited one-time funding opportunities, she said.

"We don't know the timing or the outcomes of the review of the Ontario Public Health Standards," she said. "Should there be major changes in requirements of health units, that would obviously change how we might allocate our resources."

Another uncertainty is a review of the funding formula for the provincial contributions to health units.

"We don't have a timeline or idea of what that will include," Bocking said. "I think it's unlikely that it will include a massive investment into public health provincially, but we also like to still hope and advocate for that."

Additional pressures in the budget's development was negotiated collective agreements with staff for higher wages parallel to inflation. And insurance increases are anticipated for 2025.

> ***"Should there be major changes in requirements of health units, that would obviously change how we might allocate our resources."***
>
> – Dr. Natalie Bocking

"And then we do continue to see program areas under very significant pressure related to increased demands from the province for programming," she said.

The health unit is responsible for the management and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for primary care as well as the new provincial program for both adult and child respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccines.

"We receive a very small amount of reimbursement from the province for delivery of those additional programs but have not actually received long-term sustainable funding to support that expansion," Bocking said.

A new Emergency Management Guideline added additional requirements for health units to support fall respiratory preparedness. Those provincial demands for more work extend to substance use prevention and harm reduction measures.

"Our ability to respond to the drug poisoning crisis or other local need as they arise really might change year to year depending on what the context is," she said.

There are a number of means the unit and its staff have recently adopted as cost-saving measures. Some supplies are no longer needed because of the hybrid working environment. Some vacant positions have been decided to remain vacant or unfunded in 2025.

Cash reserves may be used next year to balance the budget. Because of uncertainty about next year's budget, some surplus cash wasn't used this year. That can be carried forward for 2025.

She said there's about $1.4 million in cash surplus that could be used to offset pressures in the 2025 budget. But that's money that generates interest while sitting in a bank account.

"So this is a balance of using our cash surplus in reserve but then accounting for that in our operating budget," she said.

The goal is to maintain the current level of service delivery by using a responsible amount of cash surplus to offset the challenge in 2025 and to impose a reasonable tax levy increase on the municipalities the unit serves.

The unit is looking at a 0.7 per cent increase globally in its consolidated 2025 budget over this year. There's expected to be a two per cent increase in its cost-shared budget to respond to inflationary pressures and operational expenses.

"I think it's important to note that this is not a sustainable approach long-term," Bocking said. "A sustainable approach, we wouldn't need to offset pressures using our cash surplus every year."

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THE ECHO HALIBURTON COUNTY

A not so *Silent Night*

Haliburton's annual Santa Claus Parade was held in the evening on Friday, Nov. 22. Despite some early drizzle, the streets were packed with people of all ages to watch the floats drive down the main street in Haliburton. This year's theme was "Colours of Christmas", and the many people involved in the parade displayed their best work. /TIM YANO Staff photographer

Family fun at the fair

A local vendor smiles as customers browse the market on Saturday. /ADAM FRISK Special to the *Echo*

Seager Cox, 2, and her mom, Amber, are all smiles while Pockets the Face Painter does her magic at the 5th annual Haliburton Winter Fair.

Think theatre; HHSS brings Ancient Greece to life

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

The HHSS senior drama class has been hard at work putting together their version of *Circus Olympus,* a new-age retelling of some classic Greek myths. The show kicks off this week. /Photo submitted

The future looks bright for the next generation of theatre students.

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School (HHSS) will be presenting their annual performance this week, titled *Circus Olympus,* at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion.

"The show is like if you went to a circus, but instead of elephants and peanuts, you get Zeus and Demeter," said the director of the play, Veronica Beynon.

Beynon is a student at HHSS, and is currently completing Grade 13 before hoping to get into the world of animation through Sheridan College. She's got a fiery passion for theatre and the arts. "I think that directing the play is a good segue to the entertainment industry," she said.

The show itself is put on by the senior drama class, with a handful of interested juniors also participating both on and off stage. Beynon chose the play based on the variety of roles available to the students. "I was looking for something not too cringey for high school students," she noted, "but also something that incorporates comedy. *Circus Olympus* is a nicely packed array of stories."

The premise of the show is centred around five different storytellers, deemed the "Greek Geeks", who take the audience on a journey through the many storylines of Ancient Greece, though with the quirky and comedic undertones of the circus.

"We've done *Romeo and Juliet*, we've done *Grease*," said Beynon, "so we wanted to do something totally different this time."

While Beynon is confident on-stage, finding her footing in her directorial debut and confidently leading the team, Kendra Korpela likes to stay in the shadows behind the scenes.

Korpela is the play's stage manager, and brings wisdom and experience to the role. "I've been interested in theatre for three years now," she said, "and it's my role to smooth out all the little bumps."

The Grade 11 student has been involved with various Cntrl-Art-Del performances; a theatre troupe in the Haliburton Highlands that is dedicated to nurturing the love of theatre for the youth of the community. Korpela noted that Ella Leis, a seasoned stage manager with the organization, has provided support and guidance to the student, and she credits much of her knowledge to Leis's direction.

As a result, Korpela runs a tight ship backstage. "Kendra is really amazing," said drama teacher Meghan Mardus, who is facilitating the steps taken with the performance. "She is always one step ahead of whatever we need. She really understands the magic of theatre."

Mardus says that watching the play take shape this year has been a real treat. "I love how much student leadership is happening in this show," she noted.

In past years, many of the drama students have gravitated to the on-stage portion of performing, with much of the tech components falling on the teachers.

But this year, Mardus has incorporated tech training into the drama program at HHSS, and as a result, she's seen many of the students thrive in the backstage world of theatre. "I'm having so much fun," she said. "It's really just magic to see it all come together."

This week, the cast and crew will be running their tech week, where Beynon and Korpela will be working diligently to fine tune the performance, before their opening night on Nov. 28. The show will run again on Nov. 29 for students at JDH through the day, followed by an evening performance, before closing their run on Saturday, Nov. 30.

Any funds raised from the performances will go directly into their school trip to perform at the Star Festival at Sheridan College in December. "We want to make that trip available and accessible to all the students involved," said Mardus, noting that the opportunity to perform in front of adjudicators at the festival, plus watching and experiencing theatre in new locations, can be directly beneficial to all students.

Tickets for the show will be available at the door on the night of the performances. Show starts at 6:30 p.m. "I feel proud to say I've directed this," said Beynon, referencing the group, and how far they have come. "I know they're going to blow it out of the water."

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Published by **White Pine Media Corp**

CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER AWARD 2018

DAVID ZILSTRA
Publisher and Ad Director
david.zilstra@gmail.com

JENNIFER MCEATHRON,
General Manager and Sales
jenniferm@haliburtonpress.com

EMILY STONEHOUSE, Editor
emily@haliburtonpress.com

CIRCULATION
subscriptions@haliburtonpress.com

JAMES MATTHEWS, Reporter
james@haliburtonpress.com

THOMAS SMITH, Reporter
thomas@haliburtonpress.com

KAREN LONDON,
Production Co-ordinator
karen@haliburtonpress.com

REED SACHAROFF, Production

LAURA SMITH, Sales
laura@haliburtonpress.com

PAUL BANELOPOULOS, Sales
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A pine marten looks up to the sky on a grey November Day. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

A good life

emily stonehouse

Editorial

I WROTE A few weeks ago about dichotomies. The balance of both. This is once again a winding road I have journeyed down this week with our local postal workers going on strike.

I sat and chatted with the postal workers on a grey Friday morning; the sleet dampened my notebook as I scribbled their words down, with a few being lost to the wind.

This was day five for them out in the cold, their cardboard signs hanging from their chests, demanding health and safety first, access to benefits, a fair deal - written in bold red and black ink.

Like anybody, they want a good life. A healthy future. A job they enjoy. The opportunity to not just scrape by, but actually to live. Who wouldn't want that? They have every right to fight for what they want. And, if anything, I support them.

But I also want to support our local businesses who are struggling as a result. Now more than ever is the time to shop local wherever we can. Normally, this time of year, the post office is usually abuzz - artisans and movers and makers packing up their products, sending them far and wide for excited hands to open up over the holidays.

I always like the post office over the holidays; the energy palpable and electric with bustle and pomp. I love sending letters with Christmas ornament stamps tucked into the corners, and receiving boxes that I know will make my little ones beam.

But we can be both. We can mourn that absence of holiday spirit, the loss of stability for so many who rely on postal workers to make their livelihood tick, but also support the workers rights to a fair and equal life.

One of the workers told me that for the most part, people are in solidarity with their fight. With cars honking as they drive by and folks waving out their windows.

Yet others are flailing less dignified fingers out the window at them; yelling obscenities and taking the winds out of their sails; a never-ending uphill battle.

Some just can't be both. Can't process how their own actions also impact others. Can't consider how their own inconveniences take a toll on the community around them. If anything, this strike has reminded us that we are all interconnected in a delicate web of dependencies. This is especially relevant in a rural community, where the many livelihoods of individuals hang in the hands of a select few who sit at big desks, far from here.

That's what I believe so many forget. Many of the decision makers behind these situations are not locals. They're not the ones struggling on slippery roads to deliver mail, not the ones counting every penny over the cold winter months as a small business.

So often, they're the ones who sit on a cushy salary and comfortable benefits; playfully pulling at the strings of their puppets; the every day person, just trying to survive.

Everybody wants a good life. A healthy future. A job they enjoy. The opportunity to not just scrape by, but actually to live. Kudos to the people who fight for that right.

And while many are impacted by the decision to stand their ground, may we remember that we all deserve happiness in this grey world. We can understand the balance of both.

An afternoon of magic

Tales from the great

lynda shadbolt

Green meadow

WE ARE all magical. Magic is all around us. Our job is to notice it. Treasa Levasseur describes herself as a "busy creative"on her website. She says her life work is "communal creative uplift" whether she is on the stage performing or behind the scenes making things happen. She is a theatre and music maker, a group facilitator, an arts educator, an administrator and a mover and shaker. My connection to Treasa is that I sang in her choir at Winter Folk Camp and attended a performance of hers when she sang at the Minden United Church (all of this before the pandemic). I can honestly say that I felt uplifted when I spent time with her. Her magic radiates out from deep inside her beautiful heart. And it is contagious.

So on a quiet Saturday afternoon in November you can imagine my delight when I reconnected with Treasa at Illuminate 2024, an inaugural celebratory event to highlight all of the success and goodness of the Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre. Approximately 50 people attended this event to recognize the founders of Brooksong, and to acknowledge the donors, volunteers and our community who make Brooksong a strong and vibrant whole person cancer support centre. We were celebrating its past and its present and its future.

Treasa got up to sing and told her story of her connection to Brooksong. In 2022 she applied to be an artist in residence at the Hall's Island Artist Residency that is run by the Haliburton County Co-op. Artists, of all disciplines, can apply to stay on the island and have some time to create, free from distractions of their everyday life. Treasa applied and was accepted and was excited to go. Shortly after getting her acceptance she was diagnosed with breast cancer and called to cancel her spot due to treatments. The administrators of Halls Island told her they would save her spot and so she was able to attend in the summer of 2024.

During her cancer treatments Treasa was fortunate to attend an online expressive arts program that was run by Brooksong, with Fay Wilkinson and Brian Nichols. As I sat and talked to Treasa, it became very clear how much the arts program supported her during her treatment. She is incredibly grateful. Part of the Hall's Island experience is that the artist is asked to give back to our county in some way. And so performing at Illuminate was Treasa giving back and saying thank you.

She performed one of the songs she wrote while on the island. I am always paying attention to magical moments. Where there is love. Where there is community. Where there is hope and kindness. This event was full of magic. Stories were shared. Music was played. Good food was consumed. And the community was acknowledged and built. There are so many magical things about Haliburton County and Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre is one of them. It is a one of a kind place that anyone who has cancer, and their caregiver would be so grateful to have when needed. I love when I am in the presence of magic.

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points of view

Thinking big

steve galea

Loon Tales

THE OTHER day, I walked into a store, when a fellow I know greeted me with, "Hey Big Guy!"

I won't lie to you. This always confused me.

I mean, at 5-foot-3 (provided the relative humidity, barometric pressure, and earth's current gravitational pull is favourable), I am not exactly what anyone would envision as a "big guy."

Yet, I get this greeting a lot. So much so that I have started to reconsider the situation. I mean, there have been countless occasions when I have been wrong while everyone else around me has been right.

Which begs the question: What if I really am a "big guy"?

Suddenly, it all made sense.

When I was a kid in the late 60s, there was a TV show called *Land of the Giants.*

It was a science-fiction show, in which sub-orbital space travellers on a trip from Los Angeles to London, found themselves dragged through a dimension lock. They then crashed on a planet quite similar to Earth. On this new planet, however, everything was almost the same, except twelve times larger in size.

OK, here's the strange part.

Somewhere around that time, I was riding my three-speed bike at almost sub-orbital speeds to my friend's place – and, in an unsuccessful effort to avoid a kid who reputedly had cooties, I crashed into a garbage can. Several actually – which also gave me cooties. (I'm better now.)

But the question is did I go through a dimension lock prior to that crash? The evidence supports this. You see, in the time that has followed since that day (I was 11), everybody around me has always been at least 12 times larger than me. Back then, my parents told me that my growth spurt would come.

It never did.

But what if that was part of the conspiracy?

I guess what I'm trying to say is I can't believe it has taken me 51 years to realize that I have been stranded here in the Land of the Giants – or what you giants call the Land of us.

It's OK. I'm not upset. At least it all makes sense now.

Sure, I can't help but think how well I might have done in the NBA of my former planet, but I wouldn't go back. I am accustomed to not reaching things on the top shelf. I enjoy being good at limbo. I like being the most difficult target at dodgeball.

I mentioned this to Jenn last night and she sighed. I suspect she's under strict orders from your secret planetary council not to let me in on this.

Instead, she explained that when people say "Big Guy" to me, they are just trying to be funny – because I am actually a small guy.

Sure, but that didn't explain why she suspiciously skirted around the dimension lock issue. Also, how do you explain the fact that your whole world is essentially scaled too large for me, a "big guy", by all other accounts?

Nonetheless, Jenn is not budging on this – though she did mumble something about me having gigantic issues.

Later, I asked, "So, you are saying is that people will call another person something that is the exact opposite of what they so obviously are, just because it's kind of funny?"

"That's right, Smart Guy," she replied.

And then she let out a gigantic laugh.

pic *of the* past

Can you help George Pratt solve a mystery? George sent in this image for pic of the past in hopes that someone out there knows the names of these students. "All we know at the moment is that the gal on the viewer's left in the back row is Ria Finlay, of the great Finlay clan of Tory Hill environs," he writes. This photo is from November of 1939 and is marked "Haliburton Cont. School." If you know any of the other people in the photo, give the *Echo* a call at 705-457-1037 or email emily@haliburtonpress.com. Have a pic of the past to share? Bring it in to the office at 146 Highland Street.

letters to the editor

Thanks to local medical team

To the Editor:

When my alarm clock went off on Friday, Nov. 8, I thought this day would be like most others. How wrong I was when my wife Joan said she wanted to go to the Haliburton Hospital! I asked what was wrong and she replied with chest and back pain.

I said okay and before I was dressed she said please just dial 911. It became really serious when the ambulance was dispatched and arrived very quickly in our driveway. The paramedics attended to Joan and she was Haliburton bound within about ten minutes. The Algonquin Fire Department was also on hand with reassuring suggestions, very much appreciated.

I arrived in Haliburton a few minutes after the ambulance and was taken in by the security guard and a nurse told me it really looked like a heart attack.

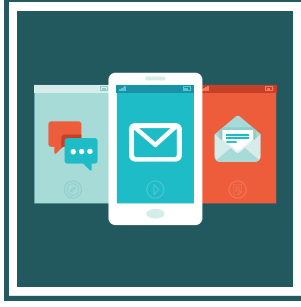
A doctor told us Joan would be transported to Peterborough Hospital as soon as possible and around 11 a.m. they left Haliburton.

I was informed that an operation would likely take place in the early evening and the hospital would call me. To my surprise Joan called me and said there were patients ahead of her but that the hospital would call when they were finished. True to form they did call and said she now has three stents in one artery and is in recovery.

Such wonderful care from doctors, nurses, and paramedics is just incredible and all in one day from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.. How fortunate we are to live in such a great county. Our sincere thanks to everyone involved.

Bob Mann,
Algonquin Highlands

Letters to the Editor note: Submissions are subject to editing for newspaper style and punctuation.



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
emily@haliburtonpress.com

Seeing the world from Haliburton; Linda Coneybeare hangs up her hat

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Through the years, the colours, sights, and sounds of downtown Haliburton have shifted and changed.

Kosy Korner changed locations, Sharpley's became Algonquin Outfitters, a variety of restaurants and boutiques have shifted gears and changed hands.

But one little sight that has stood the test of time, was seeing Linda Coneybeare at the travel agency, right in the heart of Haliburton. "I've been on that main street in Haliburton for over 20 years," said Coneybeare, "I have fond memories of my kids walking in after school, asking for a toonie to buy some candy in town before we went home."

As of the end of October, the seasoned travel advisor has decided it's time to officially retire, after countless trips, and even more happy customers. "I've had lovely letters and emails from clients when I announced I was retiring," said Coneybeare, "I've helped make a lot of memories."

Coneybeare has called the Haliburton Highlands her home her whole life. "Born and raised here," she chuckled, "I'm a country mouse."

But even growing up in a small town, she knew she wanted to see the world. "I knew in high school that this is what I wanted to do," she recalled. "Originally, I wanted to be a flight attendant, but then I found out there was a way to get all the perks of traveling, while keeping your feet in one place."

After working at an airport in her 20s, Coneybeare returned to the Haliburton Highlands in the early 1980s to bring the world of travel to the community. "And that's when the first travel agency started in the Highlands," she said.

Since then, she has truly traveled the world; Europe, China, South America, and more. Each experience nestling its place into her heart and mind. Coneybeare noted that many often ask about her favourite place she's visited, to which she surprisingly replied is Jordan in the Middle East. "It's truly the most welcoming country," she shared. "Great education system, amazing artifacts. I am so fortunate that I got to see that."

Linda Coneybeare has had the opportunity to explore the world as a travel agent, and after nearly 34 years in the role, will officially be retiring from the job. /photo submitted

And her love for travel was contagious. From a young age, Coneybeare brought along her two kids, Patrick and Chloe, on many of her trips, fostering a love and interest towards different cultures their whole lives. "Being able to travel myself was amazing," she noted, "but to be able to instill that love of travel in my own kids, that was the greatest part of the job."

Coneybeare believed in the importance of working with an agent when planning a trip. "We always said that without a travel agent, you're on your own," she chuckled. She noted that it isn't always the logistics that travelers need a helping hand with; sometimes it's simply the confidence to believe that they can take the trip, that they can travel the world.

This support was particularly necessary when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020; changing the nature of travel around the world. "We were appreciated through Covid, we helped a lot of people get home," she said.

Once the brunt of the lockdowns were past, Coneybeare then worked with individuals to safely travel again, often navigating a mental barrier and opening up the world to new possibilities for travelers. "Last year was very busy, there was a boom," she said. "It has never been busier than it was last year."

But Coneybeare has gradually been winding down her career. When the pandemic first hit, she was diagnosed with stage one breast cancer, and then she was required to work from home, closing down her beloved little office in the heart of Haliburton.

"I thought to myself, 'okay, this is the end of it all,'" she reflected. "I worked from home, and it was successful, but it just wasn't the same."

But suddenly, after recovering from her breast cancer diagnosis and finding her footing from working remotely, Coneybeare said that her "stars aligned."

Coneybeare reconnected with an old friend, Rob Freeman, a helicopter pilot and fellow avid traveler. "I've been to places that he hasn't been, and he's been to places I haven't been. It's a perfect fit," she shared. "Wonderful things happen when you're not making plans."

The two are set to be married next year, and, after nearly 34 years as a travel agent, Coneybeare is going to retire from the industry, and the two plan on exploring more of the world together. "Never give up," she said. "It's never too late."

Air Transat will continue to operate remotely in the Haliburton Highlands, now with Machenzie Vasey at the helm. A lifelong Haliburton County resident herself, Vasey looks forward to continuing on the legacy that Coneybeare has built in the community.

Vasey shared that it was an absolute pleasure working alongside Coneybeare the past few years. "We have shared many laughs, tears, and great memories over the years, and now a lifelong friendship," Vasey said.

And while Coneybeare intends to travel and see more of the world with her new husband and a lifetime of memories from her career, she knows that she will always call Haliburton home. "To be able to live in the most beautiful place, but to be able to travel the world," Coneybeare mused, "it doesn't get any better than that."

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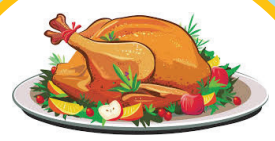
AJ LaRue Arena, Haliburton:
SKATING: 5 pm - 7 pm



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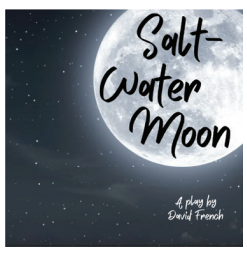
~ Douglas Walker,
Artistic Producer ~

For our 25th Anniversary season the Highlands Summer Festival presents five glorious productions designed to rekindle your love for live theatre. Story-telling, to delight, entertain and fascinate, all five productions for only $175....it is almost like getting one show for free.

The summer season opens with the satirical but a little off-the-wall musical, ***Urinetown***. It all starts with the sixteenth letter of the alphabet, P. The letter which speaks for itself or, when spelled out, pee, is the central theme to this fast-paced musical. Urinetown is a metaphor for the over-arching intrusion of big corporations into all aspects of our lives as the plucky citizens fight back. With music and lyrics by Mark Hollmann, and book and lyrics by Greg Kotis, the cast makes its case against the legal system, capitalism, social irresponsibility, populism, bureaucracy, corporate mismanagement, and municipal politics with music, humour, and boycotts even as several love stories emerge from the mayhem.
Opening July 1st through to the 8th.

Outstanding musicianship and energetic staging that will leave you calling for more – ***The Fitzgeralds*** have been dazzling audiences for years. We are delighted to include The Fitzgeralds in this summer's program, which will feature their lightning-fast fiddling and some equally mesmerizing footwork.
Opens July 9th for 3 performances.



For our third show, we turn to the production which opened the Festival 25 years ago, the award-winning ***Salt-Water Moon***. We chose this quintessential Canadian play by David French to kick off the inaugural HSF season. Set in Newfoundland eight years after the end of the First World War, this is a touching love story with the conflicted young lovers over-lain by the memory of the horrors of the war, changing roles for women in society and technological advances. The story of Salt-Water Moon resonates as strongly today as it did when we first presented it on our stage in the summer of 2000.
Opening July 15th running to the 22nd.

Accusations, mistaken identities, and romances run wild in this traditional, laugh-out-loud farce, ***Drinking Habits***. Two nuns at the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing have been secretly making wine to keep the convent's doors open, but Paul and Sally, reporters and former fiancées, are hot on their trail. They go undercover as a nun and priest, but their presence, combined with the addition of a new nun, spurs paranoia throughout the convent that spies have been sent from Rome to shut them down. Drinking Habits, by Tom Smith: wine and secrets are inevitably spilled as everyone tries to preserve the convent and reconnect with lost loves. (This production contains mature themes. Recommended for ages 13 and up. There is no official rating system for live theatre. We encourage you to use your judgment based on your child's age and maturity level.)
Opening July 27th to August 1st.

Feeling Bublé: "*Jay was amazing!! What a wonderful performance! He has such a wonderful voice and he had Michael Buble's moves down to a T.*" Be a part of this feel-good performance of music featuring Michael Bublé's greatest hits performed by Jay Davis and his world-class jazz band.
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Survey says: Public health unit satisfies residents' needs

JAMES MATTHEWS

Staff Reporter

When you pledge to improve customer experience, the best way to get indication of effectiveness is to go straight to the public you serve.

And that's what the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Units has done.

Fiona Kelly, the health unit's foundational standards director and chief nursing officer, said public health's latest initiative related to its customer experience pledge is a critical component. And that is a survey undertaken to garner feedback toward enhancing service quality.

"The survey helps us to lay a foundation on which we can begin to identify opportunities to improve and prepare to measure and monitor the experience of our customers," she said.

At the heart of this initiative lies the survey, designed to gather feedback aligned with seven core promises outlined in the pledge. The survey provides invaluable insights into the experiences of individuals who have utilized the health unit's programs and services.

In July, 161 surveys were started and 97 were completed. The survey can be accessed from the HKPR website.

"This is pretty common with public surveys," said Kelly. "Some people just like to go through a survey, see what it's all about, see what's pertinent to them. They don't necessarily complete it."

Fifty per cent of completed surveys dealt with sexual health. Immunizations and vaccines were interacted by 22 per cent, while six per cent of surveys interacted with infectious diseases. Four per cent of respondents cited food and water safety and phone support for families as concerns. Three per cent of the surveys interacted with health equity and climate change.

"That was interesting information for us to gather," Kelly said.

Between 70 and 77 per cent of respondents indicated such things as satisfaction with their experience, with the information and assistance they received, and that they understood that information.

Through the pledge, the public health unit endeavours to treat people courteously and respectfully and to work with them to best meet their needs. People can expect a timely response with health information that is easy to understand.

The unit ensures its programs and services are as inclusive and accessible as possible and it will make improvements based on public feedback received.

Public input by way of the survey helped "identify what people believe are the key pieces that should be incorporated in a customer experience standard, a comprehensive standard for the organization but also a forward facing pledge to our public," Kelly said. The pledge is a promise to clients, community partners, and the public that will be the cornerstone for how staff at the district health unit strive to respect and engage with clients.

While the survey primarily focuses on improving experience, it's important to note that it is anonymous, so the HKPR District Health Unit will not follow-up with you regarding your responses and feedback.

Feedback gathered will be used to improve program and service quality.

"We are dedicated to ensuring that every interaction with the HKPR District Health Unit is positive and impactful," said Kelly. "The programs and services experience survey is instrumental in helping us understand our strengths and pinpoint areas for improvement, ultimately allowing us to better serve our diverse community."

Holly Jolly Jog

Joe Iles, 3, reacts with his mother, Jen, after winning the best children's costume at the 11th annual Jolly Jog on Nov. 24 in Haliburton. /ADAM FRISK Special to the *Echo*

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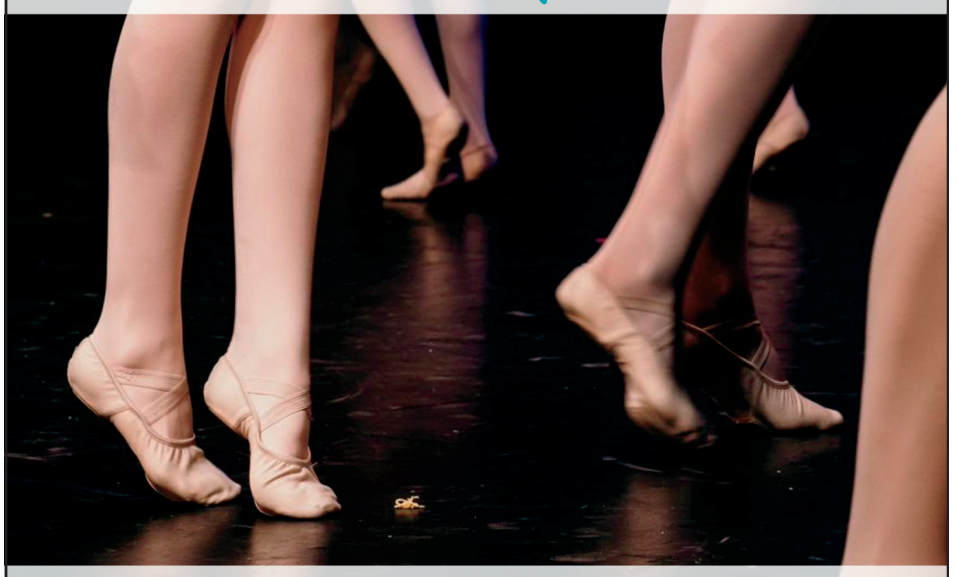

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Features Brasserie: comfort food refined in the Highlands

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

When I first scheduled an interview at Features Brasserie in Fort Irwin, I set aside an afternoon.

Not because I planned to spend the entire day out there, but because I assumed it would take me a while to get there.

When I arrived in less than half an hour from the village of Haliburton, the owner and operator of the new establishment, Steven Rowell, had a chuckle on my behalf.

"It's a lot closer than people think it is," he said. "I'm actually closer to Haliburton from here than I was when I worked in Eagle Lake."

Nestled in the heart of the little Fort Irwin cove, Features Brasserie offers a warm and inviting atmosphere; with soft colours, bright windows, and debatably the most impressive bar offerings in Haliburton County.

Rowell opened the business with his co-owner, Alex McCracken, and the dynamic duo certainly know their way around the kitchen, having both worked in a variety of restaurants and accommodations for over 30 years. "We both have diverse experience in the industry, and we bounce off each other," said Rowell.

"I've been in the industry for 37 years now," he said, who noted that he got his start working at Pinestone as a teenager, before exploring the culinary world both locally, and across the country.

Having dabbled in everything from fine sushi restaurants in downtown Toronto, to exploring high-end French and Italian restaurants around the province, Rowell brings a wealth of experience to the role in the new restaurant.

Steven Rowell and Alex McCracken, co-owners of Features Brasserie in Fort Irwin. /Photo submitted

And his heart has always been in the Haliburton Highlands. After years working at Sir Sam's Inn in Eagle Lake, Rowell was seeking a new opportunity, and he knew the building in Fort Irwin had been sitting vacant for some time.

Rowell saw the opportunity to bring something a little different to the community, and he jumped on it, opening the doors officially on July 15, just this past summer. "We intentionally kept things quiet for the first little bit," said Rowell. "We wanted to settle into a little bit of a routine, but it's been great so far. It's been so much fun."

Upon opening their doors, the owners quickly figured out ways that they needed to accommodate their local audience. With the original vision of the restaurant being to solely offer lunch and dinner, that vision shifted when a demand for breakfast was put on the table.

Now, the restaurant is open from 7 a.m. until 4 p.m., every day except Wednesday. On Sundays, they close at 3 p.m., "so we can have one hour of a weekend," laughed Rowell.

He said that at 6:30 a.m. most mornings, there is a lineup at the door, waiting for their morning cup of coffee.

And Rowell believes that the coffee is the best in the county. Working closely with Oliver Zielke of Rebel Elixir Coffee Roastery, Rowell spent months carefully formulating a blend that is unique to the restaurant, and people come from near and far to get their hands on it. Rowell has started selling the custom coffee in bags, for those wanting to brew their own at home.

The bags of coffee are lined up next to the homemade pies, savoury pastries, and sweet treats that the restauranteurs offer each morning. They also sell some basics, such as bread, eggs, and milk, to save the locals a trip into town, and maybe entice them to stay for a slice of pie and some lively conversation.

But what is a brasserie? "It's a French term," shared Rowell, when asked, "and it is an offering that is very casual food, very family-oriented, but with a pairing of fine wines and spirits." The restaurant logo is "comfort food refined," which is exactly what the menu dons.

The lunch menu offers a variety of palatable pleasures, such as fresh warm sandwiches, homemade fish and chips, daily quiches, duck drumettes, and of course, McCracken's famous pickle soup, which has hit the international stage through culinary competitions. "People travel for hours for this pickle soup," said Rowell.

And each meal has the option to be accompanied by one of the many wines, spirits, or local beers that the restaurant carries.

Rowell's passion is as a sommelier; with nearly 30 years of professional wine experiences under his belt. He did his training in 1997, and has been educating himself around the culture of wine ever since. "Back then only 20 people were allowed in the training course each year," he said, "and only four or five would graduate."

Rowell noted that all of his wines, alcohol spirits, liqueurs and craft beers come from small, award-winning Ontario Craft producers. "Nothing from the standard LCBO list," he said. "I purchase directly from these small producers."

When I set aside an afternoon to feature the new addition to the culinary scene in our community, it was because I thought it was a distant drive. In reality, I spent much of the afternoon exploring the food, the wine, the coffee, and of course, the conversation. Rowell's passion for the industry is palpable; always looking at expanding the offerings at the local establishment, and catering to the needs of his community.

Features Brasserie is located at 5014 Haliburton Lake Road, and can be reached at 705-754-2222.

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A country Christmas

The Holly Jolly Christmas Show, featuring country musicians Leah Daniels and Beverly Mahood, kicked off the fifth annual Haliburton Winter Fair on Friday, Nov. 22. The cozy show was held at the Music Room in Castle Antiques, and the musicians serenaded the audience with classic Christmas tunes and lively banter. /TIM YANO Staff photographer

CFUW vigil against gender–based violence

Friday Dec. 6 marks the anniversary of the 1989 senseless massacre of 14 young women studying to become engineers at École Polytechnique in Montreal. The CFUW Haliburton Highlands chapter will be holding a vigil in the Sculpture Forest on Dec. 6 beginning at 10:45 a.m.

Please join with us, everyone is welcome. We will meet at the Haliburton Highland Museum parking lot which extends from Bay Shore Road. at 10:30 where we will then proceed to the location in the forest. We will read the names of the women at 10:59 am followed by a moment of silence and a commemorative song. Here we will place ribbons on a tree to honour those women who were killed.

The vigil is part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence which began on Nov. 25 with International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and concludes Dec. 16, International Human Rights Day.

Dec. 6 is the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. In Canada, Indigenous women and girls, 2SLGBTQIA+, non-binary individuals, women with disabilities, newcomers and youth and those living in remote and rural communities are disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence.

We hope you will stand with us and wear a white ribbon to honour the 14 innocent women killed simply because they were women.

Dec. 6 , 10:45 a.m.

Haliburton Highlands Museum Parking lot.

For further information please contact cfuw.hh@gmail.com

Submitted

HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

FOR MINDEN + AREA FAMILIES IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

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HAMPER PICKUP Wednesday, December 18th 1-3pm
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Rail's End Gallery reveals two fall exhibits

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

Safe and Well 2

"Last year, Sue Tiffin wanted to do a show with youth ages 14 to 24," said Laurie Jones, executive director of Rail's End Gallery. "She had seen something done in the Kawarthas. It is a way for youth to get interested in the arts as a way to express community safety and well-being."

"During development of Haliburton County's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan (2020 – 2022), ensuring the community's voice and experiences were reflected in the Plan was a priority, and public consultation occurred with service providers and organizations, and the general public through a public survey, service provider community survey and focus groups," said Tiffin, community safety and wellbeing plan coordinator. "It is important for the County and CSWB Advisory Table to ensure we had heard – and continue to hear - from residents, including the youth in our community. In looking at how other municipalities have approached their CSWB Plans throughout the province we saw that some had engaged younger residents through art projects, an initiative we thought would be a good fit in our own community to not only hear from Haliburton County's youth, but help amplify their voices by showcasing their work."

"In classroom visits, we discussed what they think the Plan's priority issues should be, what the Plan's priority issues have been identified as being, what those challenges look like locally and how they affect their lives or the lives of friends, family and peers here. Their insights have been thoughtful and meaningful," said Tiffin. "Moving forward, these submitted works as well as survey responses will be shared with members of the CSWB Advisory Table to help guide their stewardship of the Plan."

After casting a wide net for submissions, Jones and the organizers noticed that a large majority of the submissions were from youth within the school system. This year, they leaned into Safe and Well as a youth-led project with students from the Haliburton Highlands High School and J.D. Hodgson Elementary School being responsible for submitting art and designing the exhibition.

The exhibit draws from the identified priority areas with the Haliburton County Community Safety and Well-being Plan given to the youth including Housing and Homelessness, Poverty and Employment, Substance Use, Mental Health and Addiction, and Healthcare and System Access, all from the perspective of youth living in the county.

Many students have shown interest in participating with Safe and Well 2. Students have free reign when it comes to art and are not restricted to mediums. There is also a sound system, projector, and other technologies available for students to use in the exhibition. While it has not been confirmed, some students have chosen to create their artworks using fibrous materials.

"If [they] have got a good idea, we'll make it happen," said Jones. Jones also encouraged students to make use of the space as the gallery has the capabilities to hang artworks among other methods of display.

"I'm very excited that there will be a second Safe and Well exhibition, particularly one that can be viewed in person," said Liz Danielsen, warden of Haliburton County. "This is a wonderful opportunity for the community to see how our youth feel about community safety and wellbeing… in truth, a learning experience for all of us."

Safe and Well 2 will have an opening reception on Friday, Nov. 29 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., held at the Rail's End Gallery at 23 York Street. For those that cannot attend in person, a virtual version of the gallery will be available for viewing at www.railsendgallery.com. The opening reception will involve a welcome, refreshments, and food served through the hospitality program at the high school. Liz Danielsen and Sue Tiffin will also be in attendance.

"I hope that this encourages young people to live creatively," said Jones. "To live creatively, you don't have to be an artist. It is not a job, but the pursuit of creative expression. If that's what this does, that is pretty good." Jones says that art is a language and a conversation that does not need words.

"We are hoping this exhibition will extend an invitation to area youth to include them further in the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan as well as give them an outlet to share their concerns and ideas about our local CSWB Plan and challenges they are facing or see in Haliburton County and what ideas they might have toward solutions," said Tiffin.

It's a Wrap

Art Squared, a local group of artists have organized It's a Wrap, a silent auction exhibition to raise money for the Rail's End Art Gallery. Artists that are participating in the silent auction include Jackie Wells, Deborah J. Reed, Karena Crofts, Linda Mills, and Anne Bailey. In addition to raising money for the Rail's End Gallery charity, Jones is excited about the accessibility of the artwork and the chance for these local artists to have their work seen by the public.

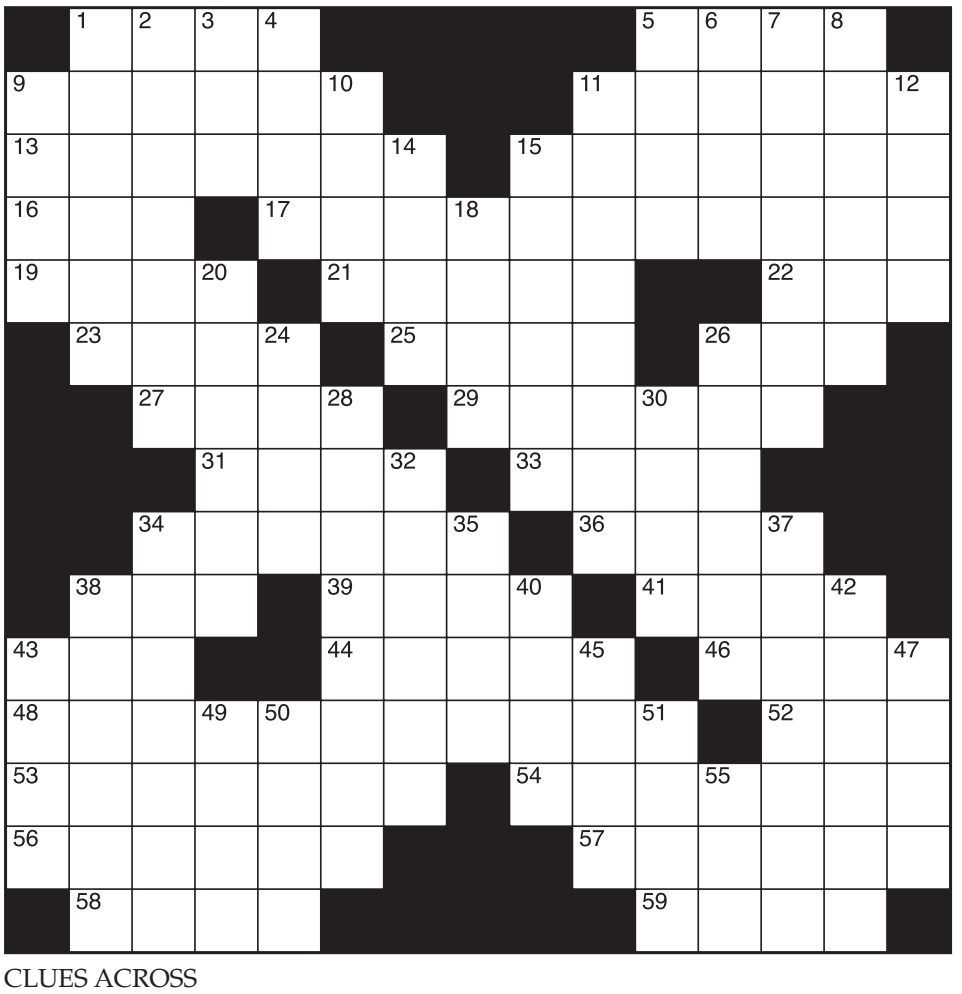
This silent auction is raising money to go towards the Rail's End Gallery in order for them to continue offering their art space to the community, free and low-cost programming, and other efforts.

Often, the Rail's End Gallery hires a summer student and Jones says that through this silent auction, they would be able to hire this student.

In 2022, a collaborative project called Look Talk Make was started between Jones and Fay Wilkinson of The Creative Cocoon. The project involved creating bundles of artwork supplies for two people to create together. With the supplies, participants can create a collage inspired by their thoughts and feelings after looking at a painting. The program was met with great success and was used in long-term care facilities such as Hyland Crest. If the Rail's End Gallery is supported through funding, they hope to create more bundles for people to create with. The Rail's End Gallery also wishes to offer a lending library of art supplies and books that can be used by anyone.

The Gallery continues to offer free or low-cost workshops that allow people to learn sketching, and watercolour painting, and much more.

The Gallery hopes to raise $2,500 to support their programming. Of the original paintings created, 20 of them are available to be bid on online through the online silent auction. Bidding starts at $50 and has minimum increments of $10. Paintings can be purchased outright for $120. The online silent auction can be found through this link: www.32auctions.com/artsquaredatRailsEnd. There are also 25 paintings available to be viewed in-person at the Rail's End Gallery. Visitors are able to view the works in person and place their silent auction bids, while providing their phone number for contact. These paintings can also be purchased for $120 if you would like to avoid a bidding war. So far, 20 per cent of their goal funds have been raised, with several paintings being purchased outright. It is highly advised to purchase a painting outright, to avoid being disappointed. The in-person silent auction and exhibition at the gallery runs until Nov. 27, whereas the online silent auction will run until Dec. 12. Charitable receipts can be made for your donations. The Rail's End Gallery and Arts Centre also has a membership program that includes free admission to other Ontario galleries, discounts on classes, events, and access to the monthly e-newsletter. Artist members are able to place artworks on consignment in the gallery shop.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Tall, upright post on a boat
5. Basics
9. Used to refer to cited works
11. Folds
13. Former UK PM May
15. Cold region of Russia
16. Standard operating procedure
17. Separating
19. Particles
21. A way to map out
22. Referee declares
23. Beginner
25. Water (Spanish)
26. Gov't lawyers
27. Non-reproductive parts of an organism
29. Spanish friends
31. A type of tree
33. Walk heavily
34. About a wood
36. Free-swimming marine invertebrate
38. Political action committee
39. SB19 hit song
41. Scorch the surface of
43. Moved quickly on foot
44. Sacred state for a Muslim
46. Growl
48. Pearl Jam frontman
52. Irritating person
53. Something requiring a solution
54. Firing
56. Hazards
57. Taiwan capital
58. Impudence
59. Rock frontman Durst

CLUES DOWN

1. One who rides an elephant
2. Absence of bacteria
3. Soviet Socialist Republic
4. Men's fashion accessories
5. "Honey" actress Jessica
6. Round red root vegetable
7. Latin term for "charity"
8. Doesn't smell good
9. Mental health issue
10. Millisecond
11. Hairstyle
12. Edible starch
14. Middle Eastern military title
15. Protein-rich liquids
18. Indian musical pattern
20. Cancer and Capricorn
24. Country along the Arabian peninsula
26. A bend
28. Fishes of the herring family
30. Antelopes
32. Chaos
34. Popular music app
35. Cooking material
37. Musical instrument
38. San Diego ballplayers
40. Small amounts
42. Poured
43. Fabric
45. Food option
47. Finger millet
49. The U. of Miami mascot is one
50. Alberta, Canada river
51. Canadian flyers
55. Dry white wine drink

Answers on page 16

Believe in magic over the holidays

The 2024 Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation's Believe in the Magic of Giving Holiday campaign kicks off this week as the holiday spirit warms Haliburton County. This annual drive supports the four pillars of the HHHS Foundation's mission: subsidies for Community Support Services, education grants for health care workers, capital purchases and improvements in long-term care facilities.

Fundraising through the annual Holiday giving campaign is an opportunity to connect with donors and share the heartwarming impact of each gift. This year, grateful patient, Owen, shared his story about how "that little ER ultrasound" sent him on a health journey that thankfully had a positive outcome. Owen committed to making an annual donation to show his gratitude and you can read the full story online at hhhs.ca/foundation.

Donations can be made:

- Online at hhhs.ca/foundation
- In person at the HHHS Foundation office located just inside the main entrance of the HHHS site, 7199 Gelert Road, Haliburton
- In person at the HHHS Minden Site Business Office, 6 McPherson Street, Minden
- After hours drop off in the donation box beside the HHHS Foundation Office entrance
- Or by calling 705-457-1580 during office hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday)

Believe in the Magic of Giving donation forms are included in Haliburton County newspapers through the month of December and the campaign continues to Jan. 12, 2025.

The tradition of adding a new huggable stuffie to the family of Foundation Bears continues ... our new fuzzy family member will be available for sale at local grocery stores and HHHS sites starting Nov. 29. Watch our social channels for more information.

And don't forget to get your 50/50 Lottery tickets for stocking stuffers, neighbourly gifts and friendly thank you gifts especially since this is a double month lottery! The lottery is running for two months, throughout November and December, giving you the chance to win big. Last year's jackpot was $11,300! If you get your tickets now, you'll be entered into both Early Bird Draws for $500 each. The Early Bird Draws will take place on Nov. 22 and Dec. 13 at 9 a.m.

For more information, call us at 705-457-1580 or email foundation@hhhs.ca.

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation is an incorporated registered Canadian charity that financially supports the hospital and health care facilities in Haliburton County for capital projects, equipment, education programs and community support services. Funds are raised through personal, business & corporate donations, special events, promotions, annual giving and a special gift program. The Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that dedicates time and expertise to have better health care and hospital facilities. The Foundation does not provide funds for the operation of the facilities.

Submitted

Kudos to Canoe FM

community news

west guilford

Eleanor Cooper
705–286–0507

I have just read the most amazing document, the annual report of Canoe FM's 2023-24 year. It sounds dry but oh the work accomplished! So much musical and theatrical talent was exposed and enjoyed! The work of preparing BINGO regularly, the huge vacation lottery cruise, not to mention the wealth of information in emergency situations, and the huge advertising commitments! I could go on and on, but to narrow it down to one segment: BINGO! Funds accrued from this one aspect amount to first hundreds, then thousands of dollars which support organizations throughout the listening area. Congratulations to the grateful recipients who put such funding to practical use. Not an avid BINGO player myself, but hats off to all that goes on to keep it rolling in our wonderful community.

Although now in Long Term Care at Hyland Crest, I keep an ear open for my beloved Guilford news, some of which goes like this. Bev and Pat Hicks have become residents on West Guilford property and we welcome them heartily. Such happiness over Bruce and Shirley Johnson's trip to Europe on the Rhine River cruise last summer.

My own commitment to Canoe FM is one hour monthly to read three stories for a.m. Sunday listeners. Scott Duggan and production manager Ron Murphy are the people who have the dubious pleasure of hearing the readings first hand. Phone me your news for the West Guilford column at 705-286-0507. DROP-ZONE still operates at the Community Centre from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays.

Municipality of Dysart et al

135 Maple Ave., P.O. Box 389,
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Telephone: (705) 457-1740
Email: info@dysartetal.ca
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING
COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

- **DATE:** Wednesday, December 11th, 2024
- **TIME:** 11:00 am.
- **LOCATION:** The Committee of Adjustment meeting will be held in the Council Chambers and electronically via Zoom. The meeting will be live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATION:

- D13-MV-2024-019 Scheffee
- The following variances are requested to permit the expansion of two legal non-complying dwellings on a lot located in the RU1L zone:
  - A variance to Section 3.19(a)(x) to permit an increase in gross floor area of a legal non-complying dwelling (Joe Beaver) of 42.7 square metres (460 square feet) as opposed to the permitted 0 square metres (0 square feet) for a total gross floor area of 101.3 square metres (1090 square feet).
  - A variance to Section 3.19(a)(x) to permit an increase in gross floor area of a legal non-complying dwelling (Donald Duck) of 24.2 square metres (260 square feet) as opposed to the permitted 0 square metres (0 square feet) for a total gross floor area of 101.5 square metres (1092 square feet).
  - A variance to Section 3.19(a)(ix) to permit the enlargement of a legal non-complying dwelling (Joe Beaver) where more than one dwelling is already located on the lot.
  - A variance to Section 3.19(a)(ix) to permit the enlargement of a legal non-complying dwelling (Donald Duck) where more than one dwelling is already located on the lot.
- Location: Part Lot 15, Concession 7, in the Geographic Township of Guilford, in the Municipality of Dysart et al.
  Roll No. 041-000-25900
  Civic Address: 2341 Kennisis Lake Road

FOR MORE INFORMATION about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Deputy Secretary-Treasurer at ameijer@dysartetal.ca.

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express their views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence, and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions.

A COPY OF THE DECISION will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary-Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Jeff Iles
Secretary-Treasurer, Committee of Adjustment

Once a hawk...

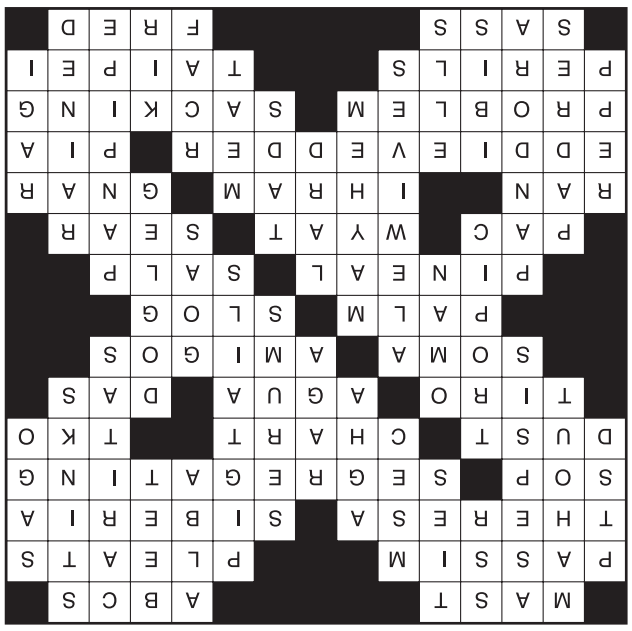
Haliburton Highlands Secondary School held their annual undergraduate awards on Thursday, Nov. 21 at the school. The program, which was traditionally held around Thanksgiving, has been shifted to focus on the academic accomplishments of those in Grades 9 to 11 this past year. Grade 12 students were recognized at their graduation ceremony this past June. In total, $6720 in scholarships was given out to undergraduate students who have excelled in their respective subjects and initiatives throughout the school year. "The support from the community is amazing," said chair of the awards committee, Melissa Stephens, noting that the scholarships are made possible by individual and community-based financial contributions. Pictured, the undergraduate award winners recognized at the ceremony. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

Notice
Tariff of Fees

Notice is hereby provided that the Council of the County of Haliburton will be reviewing and considering amendments to the Tariff of Fees By-law-4145 at the Council Meeting to be held on December 11, 2024. The agenda for the above noted meeting date can be viewed online at http://haliburton.civicweb.net Meeting to commence at 9:00 a.m.

Gary Dyke, CAO/County Clerk
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0
Telephone: (705) 286-1333
or 1-866-886-8815
Fax: (705) 286-4829

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Boreal Releases New Song and Video, *Shepherd of the Road*

Boreal, the celebrated Canadian folk trio featuring Guelph's Tannis Slimmon, Katherine Wheatley, and Orillia's Angie Nussey, is making waves with the release of their new single and video, *Shepherd of the Road*. The song, which tells the story of a truck driver who helped lead Angie home during a "white knuckle" drive through a snowstorm, marks the band's first single since 2022. Inspired by a real-life experience, this heartfelt tribute to the kindness of strangers has quickly become a fan favourite.

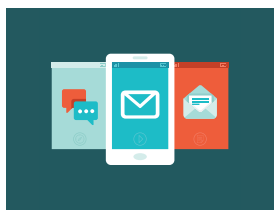
Shepherd of the Road is the first track on the album *Winterbirds*, the long-overdue follow-up to the trio's 2014 debut album *Winter's Welcome*. *Winterbirds* is produced by Angie, Tannis, and Katherine and features musicians Lewis Melville, Sam Cino, Brian Kobayakawa and Tyler Wagler. It has been over a year in the making. While a chilly theme is still predominant on many of the songs, it's a collection that's intended to bring joy year-round. The music presents a balance of soulful intensity and beautiful storytelling.

Join Boreal on Friday, Nov. 29 at the Highland Hills United Church in Minden for an intimate, soul-lifting live performance. Fans can expect a memorable evening of exquisite harmonies, laughter, and a sneak peek at the new album, which will be available for purchase at the show.

Boreal's distinctive blend of ethereal vocals and earthy depth offers a refreshingly unique take on Canadian folk music. With a live performance that promises joy, reflection, and the unbreakable bond between the band and their audience, *Winterbirds* is set to be an album that fans have long been waiting for. Boreal was formed by the powerful songwriting trio of Tannis Slimmon, Katherine Wheatley, and Angie Nussey. Together, they create a sound that draws on their individual strengths to bring warmth, depth, and soul to Canadian folk music. The trio's chemistry both on stage and in the studio is undeniable, and they're known for their joyful, intimate live performances that connect deeply with their audience.

Tickets are available at www.abbeygardens.ca

Submitted



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570 NOTICES

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Invites Proposals from qualified Contractors

Description: year-round private road maintenance on an as-required basis
Timeframe: April 15, 2025 to April 14, 2028
Location: Harcourt Park, Harcourt Ontario
Scope: Grading, ditching, snowplowing & sanding, supplying and placing granular materials, culvert maintenance/replacements and road improvements.

Closing Date: January 21, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. EST
A mandatory site visit is required to evaluate equipment requirements
To receive a proposal contact: email roads@harcourtpark.ca or call 705-448-1437

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WANTED

Historical photos from around Haliburton County

Preferably from before 1970
Help revive our *Pic of the Past* section by sending in your pictures. Bring them in to the Echo office at 146 Highland Street or email them to emily@haliburtonpress.com with dates and any other information.

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INSIDE THIS WEEK:

OVERWHELMING
The 4Cs continues to be amazed by the generosity of the community

VOTE YOUR CONSCIENCE
Strategic voting doesn't work for NDP or Green Party candidates

A NEW LIFE
Owners of donut shop celebrate the season, and their new home, with their customers

THE ECHO
HALIBURTON COUNTY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2005 VOL. 122 NO. 50 $1 INCL. GST

County budget $3 million short

Provincial funding cut as councillors wonder how to spare property owners

LANCE CROSSLEY
Staff Reporter

The county has unveiled a draft document of what is being described as the most difficult budget in recent history.

Projections are that the county will need an additional $3.2 million to meet its budgetary requirements for the year 2006 – a 40 per cent increase over this year's budget.

The figure represents an astonishing tax increase for ratepayers unless council can get creative with its accounting – even though the increase would be largely masked by the upsurge in property values that was announced this fall by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation.

"If we didn't have the municipal assessment increases this year, we'd be looking at a 40 per cent (tax rate) increase," treasurer Laura Janke told county council on Wednesday.

Councillors would only have to raise the tax rate by two per cent in 2006 with numbers as they are now. However, many in the area would feel the hit all the same because of waterfront property values that recently shot up an average of 35-40 per cent. Newly crowned Warden Murray Fearrey assured ratepayers that they will not have to take the full brunt of the shortfall, although he did not specify exactly how that would be accomplished.

"We can't go forward with a 40 per cent [increase], I think everybody at the table agrees with that," said Fearrey. "I'm not about to guess what we'll end up at but it

See **Provincial** *page 15*

DARREN LUM/Echo

A graceful tradition

Did Tschaikowsky know how much *The Nutcracker* would become an essential part of our Christmas celebration? Danielle Chvedukas and fellow dancers with Heritage Ballet made this year's performance as fresh and lively as ever. More photos on pages 14 and 15.

Penny for your vote

Will cut in the GST make a difference?

LANCE CROSSLEY
Staff Reporter

It didn't take long for the federal election campaign to mention the GST.

The Conservative Party recently stirred up the debate by pledging to immediately drop the tax by one point to six per cent and then again to five per cent in five years' time. It's a dangling carrot that the Conservatives are betting will attract voters on January 23, but is the old Mulroney tax the same hate magnet it was when it was first introduced in 1991?

It certainly was enough for Jean Chretien to get elected in 1993 when he promised (and later reneged) to scrap it. But both public and political sentiment may be more ambiguous after living with it for almost 15 years. Anne MacDermid, the local NDP candidate, thinks cutting the GST does nothing for people who really need a tax break.

"The GST is a progressive tax, which means the more you buy the more GST you pay," she says. "Poor people don't pay a lot of GST so taking a percent or two off doesn't really help poor people at all. It's very nice for wealthier people."

MacDermid would rather raise the amount that people can earn before they start to pay income tax so that poor people struggling to make ends meet have more cash in their pockets – a view that also falls in line with the Liberal platform.

Local Liberal candidate Greg Walling says that retail spending, from an economic point of view, is already at its max and that tinkering with a consumption tax will only lead to increased interest rates. He also has views that echo those of MacDermid.

See **GST** *page 14*

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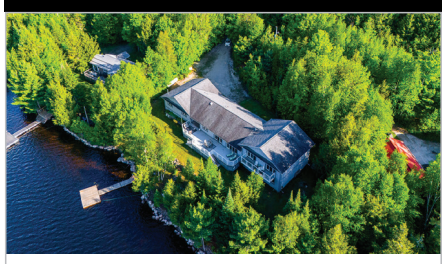

5 X BED | 4X BATH | MLS# 40598632

HALIBURTON LAKE
$799,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# 40645912

GULL RIVER
$759,900

5 X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# 40638549

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$750,000

4 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40635394

ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS
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BLACK RIVER/DRAG LAKE
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HIGHLAND GROVE
$474,900

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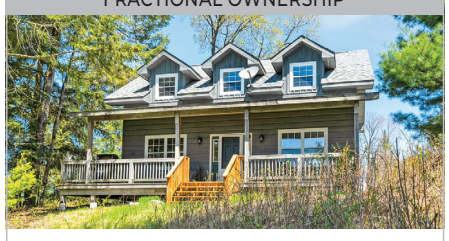
$68,500
FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP



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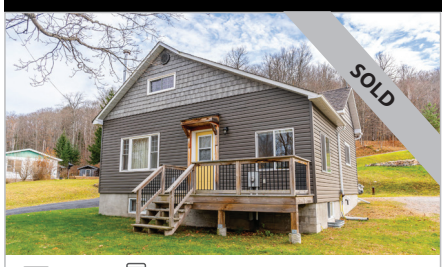
EAGLE LAKE
$597,000



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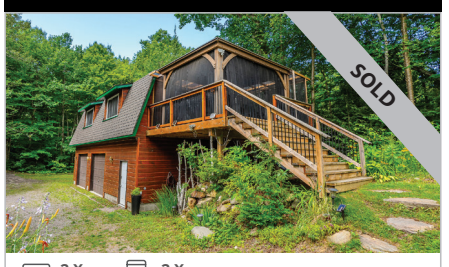
$595,000

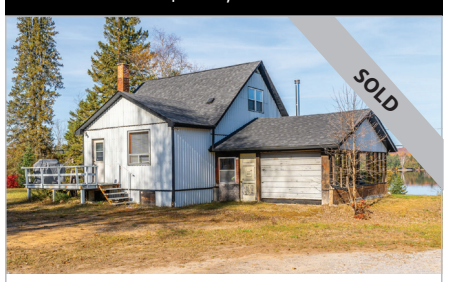


2 X BED | 2 X BATH | MLS# 40634507

HALIBURTON LAKE
$1,250,000

MLS# 40645925

WEST GUILFORD
$395,000



MLS# 40665518

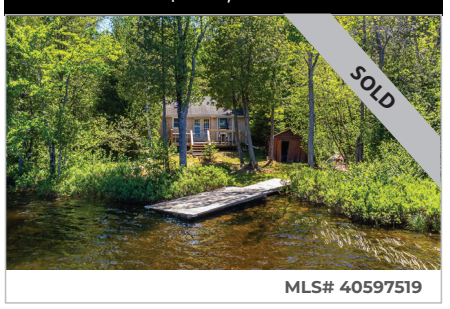
EAGLE LAKE
$925,000

MLS# 40659269

BURNT RIVER
$525,000

MLS# 40642960

PORTAGE LAKE
$399,000



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